## REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed February 9, 2006, the Examiner's claim rejections have been considered. Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections regarding all pending claims and earnestly solicit allowance of these claims.

Pursuant to the Applicants' duty of disclosure under 37 CFR 1.56, Applicants are submitting an information disclosure statement disclosing other copending U.S. Patent Applications or issued U.S. Patents related to the presently pending application. Specifically, the present application discloses information related to U.S. Patent Application No. 10/750,275, filed on December 30, 2003, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/784,237, filed on February 14, 2001, now patent 6,685,559. Additionally, the present application discloses information related to U.S. Patent Application No. 09/967,197, filed September 28, 2001, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/788,168, filed February 15, 2001, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/742,679, filed December 20, 2000.

### 1. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-8 and 10

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 5, 7-8 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilms (US 5,277,424) in view of Takemoto et al. (US 5,813,511). Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-8 and 10 have been canceled thereby rendering the rejection moot. In view of advancing the prosecution of the pending application, Applicants address the Wilms and Takemoto references in view of new claims 12-20.

Applicants respectfully submit that Wilms and Takemoto, either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest, or disclose a gaming method wherein full credits and partial credits may be wagered, as recited in the pending claims. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that Wilms and Takemoto, either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest, or disclose a gaming method wherein "a single, fixed award value is assigned to all winning events during game play using partial credits as wagers" as recited in the claims.

In sharp contrast, the game disclosed in Wilms only allows a player to play with full credits. Specifically, the Wilms reference discloses that "when the number of credits available to

the player...drops below a single unit value of the denomination being played, the player must terminate the game and cash out or select a lower wagering denomination." (See, col. 7, lines 59-67). The Applicants submit that reducing the wagered denomination value is not the same as allowing wagering with a partial denomination value. For example, if a player was wagering a $1.00 for each game and the player has $0.95 left, the player must cash out or lower the denomination to a nickel, dime, or quarter. However, the player is not allowed to play $0.95 (i.e., a partial credit) in a $1.00 denomination game. Additionally, the Takemoto reference does not make up for the deficiency of the Wilms reference as the Takemoto reference discloses a gaming machine that eliminates the need for a start lever.

The claimed invention, however, allows for game play using both full and partial credits. Applying the previous example to the claimed invention, if a player was wagering a $1.00 for each game and the player has $0.95 left, the gaming machine provides the player with an opportunity to play the partial credits. For example, the player may be able to wager the $0.95 in the form of 95 games at a wager of $0.01 per game where the 95 games are played consecutively without player input. And any winning events that occurred during the play of the 95 games would be award a fixed award value (e.g., $100 award for any winning event). For example, a winning event such as a jackpot event (e.g., 7-7-7) or a basic winning event (e.g., cherry-blank-blank) would result in the same award amount.

Furthermore, according to one embodiment, the partial credits may be automatically played without player input. In contrast to the game disclosed in the Wilms reference, the player does not need to select another lower denomination each time the partial credit value drops below the value of the wager in the claimed invention. As a result, the claimed invention increases the profitability of the gaming machine by minimizing the time required for the player to change wager denominations for any partial credits.

Furthermore, the auto-play feature encourages a game play of residual credits that otherwise may be not be played because a player does not want to find a lower denomination machine or the player does not want to take the time to redeem a small amount of money. Accordingly, the claimed invention increases the profitability by capturing monies that may not be wagered and/or redeemed by the player.

Applicants submit that neither Wilms nor Takemoto, alone or in combination, teach that any partial credits remaining on a gaming machine may be wagered by automatically playing a plurality of games at lower denomination. Furthermore, neither reference teaches or discloses that a fixed award value is given for any winning game outcome when wagering with partial credits. In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is patentably distinct over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants request allowance of these claims.

**2. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – Claims 2, 6 and 9**

The Examiner rejected claims 2, 6, and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilms (US 5,277,424) in view of Takemoto et al. (US 5,813,511) and further in view of Holch et al. (US 6,089,982).

Claims 2, 6, and 9 have been canceled thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

**3. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – Claims 4 and 11**

The Examiner rejected claims 4 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilms (US 5,277,424) in view of Takemoto et al. (US 5,813,511) and further in view of Holch et al. (US 6,089,982), and in further view of Raven et al. (US 5,429,361).

Applicants note that claims 4 and 11 are dependent claims that depend from independent claims 1 and 8, respectively. In light of the arguments submitted in Section 1 of this response, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 4 and 11 are not obvious in view of the combination of Wilms, Takemoto, Holch, and Raven because these references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all the claimed limitations. Moreover, these dependent claims further recite and define the claimed invention, and thus, are independently patentable. In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 4 and 11 have been overcome.

## CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest and *bona fide* effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 12-20 is believed to be in order, and a timely Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional required fees from Deposit Account No. 502811, Deposit Account Name BROWN RAYSMAN MILLSTEIN FELDER & STEINER LLP.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 712-8300. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Pacific Time.

Respectfully submitted,

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